

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

Dear FCC: This comment is regarding the FCC 2002 Biennial Regulatory Review- Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

In reviewing the document, I believe the stated goals of the commission (diversity, competition and localism) are in accordance with the commission's mandate to manage the publicly owned airwaves and communication systems. However, these goals clearly cannot be reached by the current trends of deregulation. The commission should work to strengthen the media ownership rules to further promote the •public interest.

Radio consolidation has become the norm since the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. For example, in my hometown of Madison, Wisconsin three companies (Clear Channel Communications, Entercom Communications and Mid-West Management) now own all of the commercial radio stations in the market and of these, Mid-West Management is the only one that is locally-owned.

The commission's goal of competition is not served by a free-market approach and if the commission further dismantles ownership rules, the country stands to lose much of its remaining locally owned media outlets. Already, only 2,303 of the nation's over 13,260 radio stations are educational FM and many of these carry a significant amount of national programming. The document states that •The Commission has historically pursued policies aimed at encouraging localism• (page 24) and the commission should actively work to strengthen ownership rules to support local control of media outlets.

I further support Wisconsin Senator Russ Feingold's proposed •Competition in Radio and Concert Industries Act of 2002• introduced in June of this year and believe the commission should follow his lead in looking at the negative effects of media consolidation. Feingold is was quoted in the August 9, 2002 edition of the Madison weekly paper, the Isthmus, commenting on the current state of the radio dial, What I'm sensing here in Wisconsin and as I travel around the country is the dumbing down of radio both politically and musically.• This is the trend that is truly endangering media diversity, competition and localism.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments,

Jill Hopke